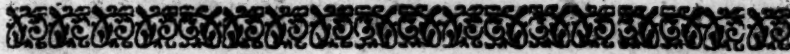


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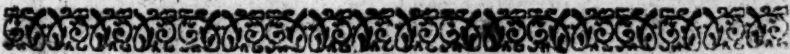
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REFERENCES

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SOME
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OF THE

Scriptures of the *Old Testament*,

From the

Testimony of JESUS CHRIST and his
APOSTLES in the *New* :

Briefly considered at the Publick Lecture in
Harvard-College, June 24th. 1755.

By EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH, D. D.
And *Hollisian* Professor of Divinity.

Made Publick at the general Desire of the College.

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SOME

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OF THE

Scriptures of the Old Testament

from the

Testimony of Jesus Christ and his

and Apostles in the Word :

as given in the Bible

by the Holy Spirit

in the hearts of the

believers



By Howard W. Crosby, D.D.

And Thomas W. Higginson, D.D.

First Printed at the General Office of the College

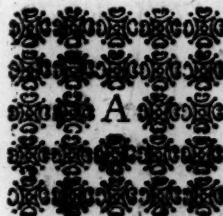
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1851

2 TIM. III. 16.

*All Scripture is given by Inspiration
of GOD----*

 ABOVE thirty Years ago I considered these Words in more than thirty Discourses on them ; and yet, perhaps, it will not be amiss to discourse on them once more, with a particular View to one or two Questions, which I had no special Occasion to consider then.

They are the Scriptures of the *Old Testament* especially, concerning which the Apostle here Affirms, that they were *all given by Inspiration of GOD* ; for these were the only *Holy Scriptures*, which *Timothy* could have known from a *Child*, as the Apostle, in the Verse before my Text, says He did the Scriptures, concerning which He speaks.

The Questions therefore which I propose to consider (by the help of GOD) at this Time shall be, *Whether a Christian, who believes the divine Inspiration of the Scriptures of the New Testament,*
needs

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needs to make a Difficulty about the divine Inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old Testament? And whether he can have any just Reason to suspect, that any Book or Books have been admitted into the Canon of the Old Testament, which were of mere human Composition? Or that any Books written by Inspiration of GOD have been kept out of the Canon?

These are very interesting Enquiries. And whether you are sensible, or not, of any special Reason for my now making them, yet I hope you will give a very close Attention to what may be said upon them; that you may not be *like Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine.*

Now I think you will all be able to answer the Enquiries for yourselves, If I prove from the Testimony of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST and his APOSTLES in the New Testament, that the Scriptures of the Old Testament were all given by Inspiration of GOD; and if I prove, from some other Considerations, that such other Books, as some have thought to deserve a Place in the Old Testament Canon, were mere human Compositions, that the *Wisdom* appearing in them was not from above by *immediate Inspiration.*

My first Business then will be to prove, *from the Testimony of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST and his APOSTLES in the New Testament, that the Scriptures of the Old Testament were all given by Inspiration of GOD.* 'Tis true, there are many other Arguments by which the Divine Mission and Authority of the Authors of those Books, which constitute the Canon of the Old Testament, might be

be evinced. The Signs and Wonders wrought by *Moses* in *Egypt* at the *red Sea* and in the *Wilderness* prove that *GOD* was with him of a Truth.----The Fulfilment of the Predictions of the *Prophets* shew, that the *Inspiration* of the *Almighty* gave them *Understanding*. And as for those Books of the *Old Testament*, which are not said to have been written by *Moses*, or the *Prophets* strictly so called, it is no light Argument to us, that the *Jews* certainly knew them to have been given by Inspiration of *GOD*, (whoever were the the Penman of them,) because they 'used such Care and Integrity, in compiling their Canon, that they would not take into it all the Writings even of the *Prophets* themselves, (such as the *Book* of *Shemaiah* the *Prophet*, and of *Iddo* the *Seer* concerning *Genealogies*) but only such as they knew to be written by them as *Prophets*, that is, by Divine Inspiration : For we are not to suppose, that the *Prophets* were inspired in every Thing they wrote, any more than in all they spake. And the *Prophets* themselves (no doubt) made a Distinction between what they had written by the Spirit of *GOD*, and that in which they had not his immediate and infallible Direction and Assistance.'

Now, since the Writings of the *Prophets*, which were received by the *Jews* into the Canon of the Scriptures, are (for the most Part) taken up in Upbraiding and sharply Rebuking them for their Sins, and denouncing the Judgments of *GOD* against them ; no Reason can be imagined

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gined, why they should refuse to admit other Writings of the Prophets (in which it was hardly possible there should be any Thing more ungrateful to them) into the Scripture Canon, but only because they knew those Books were not written by Divine Inspiration; and this exact and religious Care of the Jews not to admit any Thing into the Number of *inspired Writings*, but what was unquestionably of Divine Original, is a very considerable Argument that they knew certainly, that *those Books* of the *Old Testament*, which are not said to have been written by *Prophets*, were nevertheless *given by Inspiration of GOD.*

But I shall (according to my first Proposal) wholly wave these Things, and whatever else of the like Nature might be urged, and confine myself only to *the Testimony of JESUS CHRIST and his APOSTLES in the New Testament*; because this may be reduced to a narrower Compass than any other Argument I can pitch upon; and will be no less Convincing and Satisfactory than the best that can be offered to *Christians*, for whom alone, and not for *Infidels*, this Discourse is designed.

Now in order to prove the *Divine Authority and Inspiration* of the Scriptures of the *Old Testament* from the *Testimony of JESUS CHRIST and his APOSTLES*, recorded in the *New*, I shall charge my self with two Things.

1. To show, that *JESUS CHRIST and his APOSTLES have assured us, that those Books, which in their Days were called the Scriptures, by Way of Eminence, were given by Inspiration of God.*

And,

And,

2. To prove, *that the Books of the Old Testament, as we now have them, are the same with those which were commonly called the Scriptures in the Days of JESUS CHRIST and his APOSTLES; And that they have not undergone any material Corruption or Alteration since.*

1. I am to show, *that JESUS CHRIST and his APOSTLES have assured us, that those Books, which in their Days were called the Scriptures, by Way of Eminence, were given by Inspiration of GOD: And here I may say.*

1. That we are assured of this by JESUS CHRIST himself, whose Sayings every sincere Christian believes to be all faithful and true; worthy of all Credit and Acceptation. I shall mention only three Passages in which CHRIST gave his Approbation and testified the divine Authority of those Books, which in his Day were distinguished among the Jews by the Name of the Scriptures. The first is *Luk. xxiv. 27.* in his Conference with the two Disciples going to Emmaus, when, beginning at Moses and all the Prophets; He expounded unto them in *all the Scriptures*, the Things concerning Himself.--- Upon which I would observe.

1. That in the Judgment of CHRIST; to whom GOD gave the Spirit without Measure, there were some Things in *all those Books*, which the Jews then called the Scriptures, that either Prophetically, or Typically, or some Way or other, concerned Himself.--- From whence it will fairly follow.

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2. That

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2. That *He thought all those Books to have been written by Divine Inspiration*--- For since the latest of them was written four Hundred Years before He assumed human Nature, it was impossible they should any of them have a Reference to *Him*, unless *the Inspiration of the Almighty* (whose Prerogative it is to *shew the Things which are to come hereafter*) had guided the Authors of them.

The second Passage is in the same Chapter ver. 44, 45, 46. When, shewing himself unto the Eleven, who were gathered together, He said unto them, these are the Words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all Things *must be fulfilled* which were written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their Understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures; and said unto them, *thus it is written and thus it behoved CHRIST to Suffer*, and to rise from the Dead on the third Day; &c.--- Upon these Words I would observe.

1. That our Lord expressly Affirms, That the Writings of *Moses*, of the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*, (which was the celebrated Division of the sacred Books at that Day among the *Jews*) *all of them* contained Things which *must be fulfilled*.--- For which *Necessity*, no Reason can be given, but only, that these Things were the determinate Counsels of the LORD, who *changeth not*, and who had revealed them to his Servants, the Writers of these Books.---

And

And if any should imagine, that *all* the Books of the *Old-Testament* are not included in this Division it is added----Then opened He their Understanding that they might understand the Scriptures ; and said unto them, *thus it is written and thus it behoved*, &c. Upon which you may observe.

2. That our Saviour here does in effect Affirm the same Thing concerning what was written in the *Scriptures in general*, which He had before, *Matth. v. 18.* Affirmed of the *Law in particular*, Viz ; That *one jot or Tittle should in no wise pass from it, till all was fulfilled.* --- Thus it is written, and thus it behoved, what was written in the Scriptures must necessarily be accomplished ; which certainly infers their *Divine Inspiration.* For *who hath known the Mind of the Lord at any Time ?* Or who can foretel the Purposes of the Governour of the World, but they to whom He is pleased Himself to Reveal them ?

If it should be objected here, that our Saviour, in the two Passages which have been mentioned, only confirmed the Authority of *those Things* in the Scriptures of the *Old-Testament* which Prophetically or Typically *respected Himself* ; And that though every Thing of *this Nature* in those Books, might be written by *Inspiration* ; yet there might be a *Mixture* in them of *other Things* of a very different *Original* ; (If this I say should be objected) yet it is to be observed.

That

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That CHRIST expressly affirms, that there were *Things concerning Himself* and therefore *Things given by Inspiration in all the Scriptures*. So that thus much at least is both supposed in the Objection, and will certainly follow from the Texts which have been cited, that in CHRIST'S Account, all the Books of the *Old Testament*, were written at least *in Part*, by *Divine Inspiration*.----

But there is a third Passage of our Saviour, which plainly extends, not only to *all the Books* then received by the *Jews* for *Inspired Writings*, but also to *all Things contained in them*.--- For He gives the *Jews* this Advice, *Joh. v. 39. Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal Life, and these are they which testify of Me*.---- When He bids them *search the Scriptures*, He refers them to the sacred Canon which was in their Hands : And when he adds, that they thought *they had in them eternal Life*, He in effect gives them to understand that in so Thinking *they were in the Right*, or otherwise he would have undeceived them.--- Nor did our LORD here refer them to *some Portions* of the Scripture exclusively of others ; but takes in all. And who can suppose, that if he had found them wretchedly mistaken in this Fundamental Principle; in taking a Sett of Books for *divinely Inspired*, which were *not so* ; or were so *but in Part* ; He who was so much displeased at their *teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, would have let them alone in a Mistake, so much more Pernicious ; and suffered them to run

run on Deceiving, and being deceived? And much less can we suppose it consistent with his Office as *the great Prophet of the Church*, not only to suffer them to continue in so dangerous a Mistake without undeceiving them; "but also" to take so visible and direct a Method to "Countenance and Confirm them in it. For" tho' what we call an Argument *ad Hominem*, "may sometimes be used on Occasion of a *speculative Error*, without applying our selves "directly to confute it; yet to advise the *Practice* of Men (as our Saviour does here) in "Consequence of an Error, is what no Rules "of Reason or Piety can justify on any Occasi- "on." And therefore we ought in Conscience, and in Justice to our Saviour to suppose, he thought the *Jews* were not mistaken, in taking the *Scriptures committed to them to be Oracles of GOD*. And if *He* thought this was no Mistake, then we may rest assured that it was not; for *GOD gave not the Spirit by Measure to Him*.

And now having shewn, that *JESUS CHRIST Himself sufficiently approved and confirmed the Authority of those Books, which in his Time were commonly called the Scriptures*, there is no need that I should go on to observe,

2. *How full and express his APOSTLES are also to the same Purpose.* --- However I shall just mention a few Passages from them.

The first *Rom. iii. 12. What Advantage then hath the Jew? much every Way; chiefly, because that unto them were committed the Oracles of GOD.* --- Now if the *Jews* had been unfaithful
in

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in this Important sacred Trust, and had either suppressed or corrupted any Part of the Oracles of GOD committed to them, or had inserted uninspired Writings among them, they would have deprived themselves of a great Part of that *Advantage* the Apostle speaks of ; and it is impossible to suppose, that a Person animated with the Apostles Zeal would have neglected so great an Occasion, to rebuke and expose an Instance of Perfidiousness, in its own Nature so abominable, and of such fatal Consequence to Religion.

A second Passage, which in *express Terms*, and not merely by *rational Deductions*, shews that the Canon of the *Jews* was approved by the *Spirit of GOD* in the Apostles, are the Words of my Text, *all Scripture is given by Inspiration of GOD* ; which Words (as hath already been observed) have a special Reference to the Books which were then commonly known among the *Jews* by that Name. These, and these only, being the *Holy Scriptures*, which the Apostle tells *Timothy*, in the preceeding Verse, He had *known from a Child*. Now concerning these he affirms, that *they were all given by Inspiration of GOD*.---Nay, so fully was the Apostle *Paul* possessed of this, that speaking of what came almost directly from the Mouth of GOD Himself, he cries out, *Gal. iv. 30. What saith the Scripture ? Cast out the bond Woman and her Son*. And again, *Gal. iii. 8. The Scripture foreseeing that GOD would justify the Heathen thro' Faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all Nations be blessed*. So that

that according to him *the Scripture saith thus*, or *GOD spake thus*, are all one. The *Voice of GOD*, and of the *Scripture*, in the *Apostle's Language*, signify the same Thing.

I might proceed to observe, how that most of the Books of the *Old Testament* are one where or other alluded to, or cited in the *New*, as Books of *Divine Authority*. But I have said more than enough already to make it appear, that if the *New Testament* was given by *Inspiration of GOD*, (as every Christian professes to believe) then *those Books*, which were known to the *Jews* in our Saviour's and his Apostle's Times, by the Name of the *Scriptures*, were so too. ' Nay, in one ' Thing (as a Learned Man observes) *those Books* ' have an Advantage above *the Books of the New* ' *Testament itself*; that the Canon of *them* was ' confirmed by our Saviour and his Apostles, ' which is a Consideration that ought to give us ' abundant Satisfaction. '

But perhaps it will be objected, that how well soever we may be satisfied, that those Books were given by *Inspiration of GOD*, which were commonly called the *Scriptures*, in the Days of *JESUS CHRIST* and *HIS APOSTLES*; yet this can be no Security to us, that the Books of the *Old Testament*, as we now have them, are the same; or if they be the same in Substance, yet that they have not suffered Corruptions and Alterations of the last Importance. And unless we could be secure of this, we can never know what to trust to in them. In answer to this therefore, I proceed to the second Thing, which was,

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2. To prove, *that the Books of the Old Testament, as we now have them, are the same with those, which were commonly called the Scriptures, in the Days of JESUS CHRIST and his APOSTLES; And that they have not undergone any material Corruption or Alteration since.*

The Truth of these Things is so very obvious, to one who hath well considered all Circumstances, that they hardly need any Argument to support them.

For the *first Profelytes to Christianity* were from among the *Jews* themselves to the Number of many Thousands. *These* were as familiarly acquainted with the Books then called the Holy Scriptures, as the *other Jews* were, who still continued zealous of the Law of *Moses*. And since these Books were owned and acknowledged, quoted and referred to, and all People exhorted and encouraged to search and study them as the Word of GOD, both by JESUS CHRIST, and also by His APOSTLES; and especially since much Use was made of them to prove against the *unbelieving Jews*, that JESUS was the *Messiah* promised unto the Fathers by the Prophets, and that no other was to be expected, we must needs from hence conclude, that the Doctrines of those Books, as they were then extant, were esteemed by the *Christian Jews* as Part of the *Doctrine of JESUS*; and that those Laws and Commands which were there found, were kept and observed by *all Christians*, the Followers of JESUS, except where it appeared that JESUS had freed them from the Obligation of them; and that
the

the *Christian* must be as solicitous, as the *unchristianized Jews* could be, to preserve those Books uncorrupt and pure, from whence they fetcht a great Part of the Arguments, by which they endeavoured to defend their own Principles, and to perswade their *unbelieving Brethren* to embrace them also.

Now these Books being at once in the Hands of the *unchristianized* and of the *christian Jews*; (I might add *Gentiles* also) being revered and esteemed by both, as Oracles of GOD; and by both appealed to on all Occasions to defend and justify the Points in which they differed; and the Difference in those Points, on the side of the *unbelieving Jews*, being carried to great Outrage and Extremity, to furious Persecution, and frequent shedding of Blood; it became (through the Providence of GOD, who often brings Good out of Evil) an effectual security against any future material Corruption, or alteration of the Books then called the Holy Scriptures, rendering it *in the very Nature of the Thing Impossible*.

For if any of those Books had then, or at any Time since, been suppressed, or any new uninspired Book had been added to their Number; if any Addition, or Detraction, or material Alteration, had been made in any Passages of any of them; it must have been done, either by the joint Consent both of *Jews* and *Christians*, or by one or other of the *Parties alone*.

Now I think no Body can be so weak and foolish, as to dream it possible, that *all of both*

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Parties should combine in such a detestable Undertaking; since the *Jews* were filled with such Rage and Malice against their *christian Brethren*, as, on all Occasions, and in all Places, to stir up the Rulers and the People against them; to prosecute them to Bonds, Imprisonment, and Death itself.--- Or supposing *both Parties* had been so void of the Fear of GOD, as to be disposed to such an hellish Enterprize, and the *Jews* could have laid aside their Animosity, till a more proper Season of expressing it; yet, *what Corruptions could possibly have been agreed upon between them?*----

The *Christians*, upon such a Supposition, must have been for corrupting those Passages, from which the *Jews* argued, that their *Messias* was to appear in worldly Pomp and Splendor, to fight their Battels, and subdue their Enemies for them, and to raise their State to an higher Pitch of Glory and Renown, than it had ever been advanced to before.--- Again, on the other Hand, the *Jews* must have been for expunging or altering all those Passages, from which the *primitive Christians* argued, that the *Messias* was to be a *Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief, and to endure all that Contradiction of Sinners*, which their Master JESUS underwent: So that it was utterly impossible, that the two contending Parties should be at any Agreement between themselves, what to corrupt or alter.

Again, it was no less impossible for either of the Parties *separately* to make any material Alteration in those Books, which both appealed to,

to

to decide the Controversy, without being discovered and exposed by their Adversaries.---- For before the bitter Zeal of the *unbelieving Jews* would prompt them to keep a strict Eye upon the *Christians*.---And again, the Wickedness and Violence of their *Adversaries* was a sufficient Warning to the *Christians*, to be no less watchful over them.

Moreover, as it appears impossible in the Nature of the Thing, so it is evident in Fact, that no material Alteration hath been made by either Party ; because the Passages, which either of the Parties would have been under the most Temptation to alter, all of them remain exactly the same to this very Day, both in the *Jewish* and the *Christian* Copies.

And now, having proved from the Testimony of JESUS CHRIST and his APOSTLES in the New Testament, that those Books which were called the Holy Scriptures, in the Days of our Saviour and his Apostles, were all given by Inspiration of GOD ; And having from other Considerations shown, that the Books of the Old Testament, as we now have them, are the same, which were then called the Holy Scriptures, having suffered no material Alteration or Corruption since : I perswade my self you will all agree, that a Christian who believes the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures of the New Testament, need not make any Demur or Difficulty about the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old Testament ; And that he can have no just Reason to suspect, that any Book or
Books

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Books have been admitted into the Canon of the Old Testament, which were of meer humane Composition.

But may it not still be feared, that some ancient Books which deserve, and ought to have had a Place, in the Canon of the Old Testament, have been kept out of it.----- Certain it is, that the Romanists have added some *Apocryphal* Books to the *Scripture Canon*. And perhaps a few *Protestant Divines*, who are as far from being *popishly affected*, as any of their Brethren, may have entertained too high an Opinion of some of those Books. And therefore I shall proceed to say,--

That these were not given by Inspiration of GOD, but were mere humane Compositions ; and liable to the same Defects and Mistakes with other Writings of human Original. For the clearing of this Point, I shall endeavour two Things.

1. To prove that the Books, commonly called the *Apocrypha*, were not given by Inspiration of GOD. And

2. To shew the *Vanity of the Pretences*, by which the Romanists would persuade us to think more highly of them, than we ought to think.

1. I am to prove, that the Books, commonly called the *Apocrypha*, were not given by Inspiration of GOD.

And indeed the very Name by which they are called intimates, that they are to *lie hid*, when Proof is to be made of any Thing in Religion ; because that, not being written under the infallible Guidance of the Spirit of GOD, they are not of sufficient Authority to put an End to Controversies.

For

For the Proof of which I shall mention only two Arguments among the many which have been used.--- viz.

1. *Because they were never received, nor acknowledged, by the Jews, as Inspired Writings.--*

And,

2. *Because every Book of them bath Falshoods, either in Doctrine or History.*

1. It appears that the Books, commonly called the *Apocrypha*, were not given by Inspiration of GOD, *because they were never received, nor acknowledged, by the Jews, as inspired Writings.* That these Books were not received as Inspired Writings by the *Jews*, we have the Testimony of their Countryman *Josephus*, * who tells us, that it was only those Books which we commonly call the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*, which the *Jews* thought themselves bound to believe. And that though they had a Veneration for the *Apocryphal* Writings, yet it was incomparably short of what they ascribed to the *other*, for want of the Successional Line and Descent of the *Prophets*, to make them as Authentick and Sacred as the *other* were; to which they gave as much Credit as to their own Eyes: And never durst make any Attempt upon them, either to add, or to diminish, or so much as but to transform or disguise them.---- In like Manner all the rest of the *Jews* still do, and always did, unanimously reject these *Apocryphal Books* as no Part of their Holy Scriptures. And I think

* Adv. Api. Lib. 1.

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think the *Romanists* themselves don't presume to say, that these Books were ever received as *Canonical* by the *Jews*.

Now we know, that *to the Jews were committed the Oracles of GOD*. And we are well assured also, that they were faithful to the Trust reposed in them : that, according to the Testimony of *Josephus* above-mentioned, they durst not add, diminish, or so much as in the least transform or disguise any of these *Oracles*. I say we are well assured of this, because (as I have shown in the former Part of this Discourse) our Saviour and his Apostles abundantly approved and confirmed the Canon of the Old-Testament as it was received by the *Jews* in *their Time*. Now if the *Jews* faithfully preserved the *Oracles of GOD*, down to the Time of our Saviour, and yet received not the *Apocrypha* into their Canon ; it thence plainly follows, that the *Apocryphal* Writings were not *Oracles of GOD*, nor given by *Divine Inspiration*.

Again,

2. *The same Thing is further evident, because all the Apocryphal Books contain some Falshoods, either in Doctrine, or in History.*

Thus for Instance, the Book of *Tobit* brings in the Angel *Raphael* with a *Lye* in his Mouth, *Tob. v. 12.* saying that he was *Azariah* the Son of *Ananias*, which is far from the Spirit of GOD, or the Nature of Holy Angels, who cannot sin. He prescribes also the *Magical* Foolery, chap. vi. ver. 16, 17. of chasing away the Devil with the Heart and Liver of a Fish. And he assumes that
unto

unto himself and six other Angels, chap. xii. ver. 16. which is the peculiar Work of CHRIST, to present the Prayers of the Saints.

The Book of *Judith*, Jud. ix. 2, 3, 4. highly extols that barbarous inhuman Action of *Simeon* and *Levi*, which their Father *Jacob*, in his *Prophetic* dying Words to his Sons, condemns and curses. Gen. xlix. 7. It represents her praying to GOD for a Blessing on her Lyes; and speaks of a City and a Fact, neither of them commemorated by any other Writer of the Jewish Affairs, and therefore at least of very doubtful Credit.

Baruch saith he wrote his Book in *Babylon*, Bar. i. 1, 2. at a Time when it appears from the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, that he was with the Prophet in *Jerusalem*; and that he was afterwards carried with him by *Jobanan* into *Egypt*. chap. vi. ver. 3. This Book also makes *Jeremiah* prophesy, that the *Jews* should continue in *Babylon* for *seven Generations*; whereas in Truth he prophesied only of *seventy Years* Captivity, and *no more was fulfilled*.

But I should weary both myself and you, if I should go through all the *Apocryphal* Books, with such particular Remarks upon them. I shall conclude this Head therefore with an Observation or two upon the *Book of Wisdom*, which hath perhaps as little exceptionable, and as many valuable Things in it, as any among them.

The Author of this Book pretends himself to be *Solomon*, chap. ix. ver. 7, 8. whereas he alludes (as is generally supposed) chap. iv. ver. 2. to the *Grecian Games*, which were not instituted till

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till after the Days of *Solomon*. However, we need no other Evidence that he was not an *Inspired Writer*, but his *unjust and cruel Sentence against Bastards*, in the End of his third Chapter; a Sentence at least as shocking as any *Damnatory Article* in the *Athanasian Creed*.

In short, there are so many, and such gross Errors and Falshoods in these Books (as I could easily go on to shew, if the Time would permit,) that it is impossible any Argument whatever should give us just Reason to think them of Divine Original. For no Argument can ever drive us into any greater Absurdity to escape its Force, than it would be to ascribe such notorious Instances of Frailty and Fallibility, as most of these Books abound with, to the Holy and Infallible Spirit of GOD.

But we have no Reason to be solicitous on this Head, for (so far as I can conjecture from what I have ever yet seen) we are not likely to be pursued and pressed with such Arguments for the Divine Inspiration of these Books, as can much affect any but those, who are pre-disposed by some other Considerations to receive them kindly, and to think the best of them.----For what though it be true, as the *Papists* urge, that the *Apocryphal* Writings are sometimes quoted by the *Christian Fathers*? so also Passages are taken from *Menander* and *Epimenides* by the Apostle *Paul*; and the latter is called a *Prophet* too; And yet no Body ever thought the Writings of these Heathen Poets *Canonized* by such Quotations.---

And

And what though the *Fathers* some times call the *Apocryphal* Books *Canonical*? since they often called every Thing else so, which in their Day was wont to be read in Churches; as were the Sufferings of the *Martyrs* and divers other Things, which neither they, nor any Body else ever thought to be of Divine Authority or Inspiration.---And what though these Books were brought into the Scripture Canon, and confirmed by the *Popes Authority*, in the beginning of the fifth-Century? We shall hardly pay any great Deference to *that*, till we find his *Infallibility* better proved, than we have ever seen it yet.

But so much may suffice for the Vanity of the Pretences by which the *Romanists* would obtrude upon us a Sett of *uninspired Books* for *Divine Oracles*; which was the last Thing I proposed to consider.

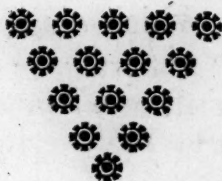
And now let us turn from disputing to adoring and praising GOD, for his Wisdom Power and Grace displayed in bringing the greatest Good out of one of the worst of Evils; in making the bitter Zeal with which contending Parties about Religion are so generally inflamed, a most effectual *Security* against any dangerous Corruption or Alteration of the Holy Scriptures. And let us bless his Name for affording us sufficient Lights to determine what was given by Inspiration of GOD, and what not, at so vast a distance of Time from us, as the last of the Books of the Old Testament were written.

26 *On the Inspiration of the Scriptures*

These Things are the LORD's *Doings*, and they may well be *Marvellous* in our *Eyes* ; *Great* and *Marvellous* are thy *Works*, LORD GOD Almighty : *Just* and *true* are thy *Ways*, thou King of Saints, Who shall not fear thee, O LORD, and glorify thy Name ?

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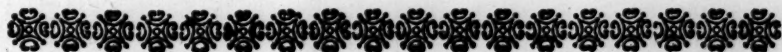
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